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Effort to exclude Rewald witnesses

The federal government is seeking to exclude testimony from nearly half the prospective defense witnesses for Ronald Rewald on grounds they were not informed of the witnesses until the last minute.

But Michael Levine, federal public defender representing Rewald, said the government was informed of many of the witnesses several weeks ago.

Rewald's attorneys will start calling their witnesses to the stand today, after Thomas Hayes, the last of more than 100 prosecution witnesses, takes the stand.

In a sealed motion, the government is seeking to exclude any testimony from Ralph McGehee, a former CIA employee who has written extensively about the agency.

Assistant U.S. Attorney John Peyton asked U.S. District Judge Harold Fong to exclude the witnesses before the defense begins its case today. But Fong said he'd give Levine until Friday to respond to the government's motion.

Fong did rule that Rewald's partner Sunny Wong won't have to testify in Rewald's defense case and also quashed a subpoena for another proposed defense witness, San Francisco lawyer David Day. Both Wong and Day testified earlier in the prosecution case.

The prosecution also sought to exclude testimony from several other witnesses for a variety of reasons — for instance, that their testimony would be irrelevant, that they had broken a rule barring prospective witnesses from the courtroom, that they can offer only hearsay evidence.